Waiver for marginal farmers in coastal areas

382. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any proposal of total waiver for small and marginal farmers owning land up to two hectares, especially in the coastal areas;

(b) if so, the present status thereof; and

(c) how are the farmers being benefited in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (c) As per the announcement in the Budget Speech 2008-09, the Agricultural Debt Waiver and Debt Relief Scheme, 2008 for farmers has been implemented in the entire country including the coastal areas by its due date i.e. 30th June, 2008.

All agricultural loans of marginal farmers (i.e. holding upto 1 hectare) and small farmers (1-2 hectare), disbursed by Scheduled Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks and Cooperative Credit Institutions up to March 31, 2007, overdue as on December 31, 2007 and which remained unpaid until February 29, 2008 have been waived.

As per provisional figures, 77,55,227 farmers (66,46,198 small and marginal farmers and 11,09,029 other farmers) have been benefited in Andhra Pradesh under the scheme and the eligible amount of debt waiver and debt relief is Rs. 11,353.71 crore.

Global financial turmoil

383. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country has to face heat of financial turmoil due to the global turmoil; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken in this direction to balance the financial economy in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) Pursuant to the crisis in the global financial markets and news about the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers on September 15, 2008, Indian stock markets have witnessed a fall. Sensex has recorded a fall from 13531.27 on September 15, 2008 to 11309.09 on October 13, 2008. The Nifty recorded a fall from 4072.9 to 3490.7 during the same period.

However, the fundamentals of the Indian economy have been strong and continue to be strong. Our banking system is stable and sound. What we are witnessing today in the Indian markets is an indirect effect of the global financial situation. This is only a reflection of the uncertainty and anxiety in the global financial markets. However, there is no reason for any anxiety or uncertainty in India.